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THE
STRANGER

MATTIE BALCH LORING

KD1729



THE STRANGER.

1000

Amy Ricard -

1901-

Clarence Rowe
1900



"BEYOND WORDS."

(Page 41.)

THE
STRANGER



BY

MATTIE BALCH LORING

Published by The Abbey
Press of One Hundred and
Fourteen Fifth Avenue
New York
London and Montreal

KD 1729



From the gift of Arthur Houghton

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by
MATTIE BALCH LORING

THE
STRANGER



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"Until we know why the rose is sweet, or the dew-drop pure, or the rainbow beautiful, we cannot know why the poet is the best benefactor of society. The soldier fights for his native land, but the poet touches that land with the charm that makes it worth fighting for, and fires the warrior's heart with energy invincible. The statesman enlarges and orders liberty in the state, but the poet fosters the core of liberty in the heart of the citizen. The inventor multiplies the facilities of life, but the poet makes life better worth living."

GEORGE WM. CURTIS.

“En Avant.”

PRAY open your hearts to the singer, when
He timidly knocks, ye women and men:
Alas! he's nothing and nothing can be,
If you do begrudge him your sympathy:
For the best he can ever hope to do,
Is to half succeed in expressing you.

The Stranger.

BEHOLD a stranger! sinewy and strong,
Wandering ever through the heedless throng;
Stumbling I follow him; from day to day
I tread upon his heels and feel the sway
Of his magnetic presence; and I know,
Could I but kiss his robe, my lips would glow
Forever; and some healing power, divine,
Would pass from his firm hand, direct to mine,
If I could leap the never less'ning space,
And courage find to look into his face.

Ah! what a weak and worried waif is man,
Thrown on this restless globe a little span;
A brief confusion 'tis, he christens life;
A feeble, fretful, never-ending strife;
A clutch at courage, and a slip perchance,
A struggle, then a gift to circumstance;
Morbid, he lacks the strength to press his feet
In the warm footprints of this stranger sweet;
And thus at last accepts the common fate,
Resigned to fold his palsied hands and wait.

One Sabbath morning when the sunshine lay
In golden ardor on the cities' way
And the first fruity breath of autumn filled
The genial morn; while a late song bird trilled

The Stranger.

An ecstasy of urging loud and long;
To this combined insistence, in the throng
Yielding, I took my way: The trees, half bare,
Borrowing laughter from the happy air,
Simpered and beckoned; Spinsters past their prime
Coqueting with the ghost of summer time.

To the brown twigs, from whence as buds they sprung,
The spent, last leaves in withered pathos clung;
Teased by the wind, their silhouettes they threw
Beneath our feet; and dancing into view
Came tangled images of their vexed selves,
Played with by swarms of atmospheric elves,
Who wove, in reckless imitation free,
Confusing pictures of torn tapestry;
And over these, the crush of people bore
Me helpless, through the wide cathedral door.

The angel voices of the cherub choir
Ascending ceased abruptly; but higher
The echoes, on their heavenward journey sped,
Hung vibrant in the dome above my head;
And the great organ wailed a morbid note,
As though some human soul shut in its throat,
In agony, despairing, dying cried
To a dull world, for freedom long denied;
While a robed priest, in learned Latin, poured
The balm of high mass on the kneeling hoard.

From pictured saints in countless windows framed,
A world of shifting, glowing shadows flamed;
In many colored shapes fantastic turned,
Dyeing the waxen candles, where they burned

The Stranger.

In the great altar's gloom; hovering nigh
The blessed, sacred host uplifted high;
While from a swinging censer clouds of blue,
Languorous, smoking incense, filtered through
The jeweled setting. Suddenly I felt
A sharp vibration sting me where I knelt.

Startled I looked, and saw the "Stranger" pass
Lackluster-eyed, panting and pale, alas
The change! shorn of his strength, his halting feet,
Down the dim aisle toward the shining street,
Scant progress made; while paralyzed, I tried
But could not follow; inwardly I cried
"Make room, throw wide the door, can you not see
'Tis truth enslaved? O God, let him go free!"
But no one heard. The worn, breath weighted air
Sank drowsily 'neath monotones of prayer.

And when the outer world I reached at last,
The loved form of the "Stranger" long had passed;
And only his gaunt, shrunken shadow lay
Before my failing eyes, to point the way.

O time, thou silent servitor of fate,
Must all men on thy sullen humor wait?
Shaken by an inheritance of fears,
Until his shadow even disappears?
Swift, subtle, essence of immortal truth,
As old as age, and yet as young as youth;
One drop of that elixir, which is thine,
Could I but catch would make the thought world mine!

The Stranger.

But back to nature, thus retreating still,
The fighting soul returns to yield the will;
And on her constant harmonies intrude,
To beg the pipe of peace from solitude.

Lullaby, lullaby,
Sleep, wanderer, sleep;
Soft the shade, blue the sky,
I the vigil keep.

Close your eyes, close your eyes,
Through mine, shall you see;
In this wood, no strife lies
'Tween my work and me.

Fearlessly, fearlessly,
Give yourself to rest;
All is well; who shall say
What is, is not best?

Lullaby, lullaby,
Sleep, wanderer, sleep,
Soft the shade, blue the sky,
I the vigil keep.

Faith's Creed.

WHAT does it matter, if you never know,
From whence you came or whither you *must*
go?
When that dread silence broken at your birth
Reclaims the space you occupy on earth.
What does it matter? since this truth is clear,
You're in the self-same hands both there and here.

A Memory of Memories.

A POET sat at his desk one day,
And wrote, and wrote in an ecstacy;
And when his verses, he thought were done,
He anxiously read them, one by one;
And was glad to find it really true;
He had written better than he knew.
“Ah, this,” he cried, “is the spark divine,
At last, I have something wholly mine!”
But when the verses he read again,
He looked for their greatness all in vain:
More grievous still, on maturer view,
They did not seem to him even new.
Somewhere in his vague sub-consciousness
His poem was greater, he was less.

He sighed!—“I’ve written all this before.
Written far better, written far more!”
The old, old riddle, unanswered still;
Each man would guess it, but no man will.
He fell on his knees and prayed and wept,
And finally overcome, he slept;
And dreamed a phantom lifted the veil
That hides this great historical tale,
And laughing, saw the laurels he’d win
Babbling the secrets of origin.
But when he opened his eyes once more
The veil fell heavier than before.
And he through all life’s travail and fret,
Can neither remember nor forget.

Opportunity.

MAKE the most of the voice
God has lent to you;
For the soul teaches it,
And it teaches too.

The Voice.

F LUNG prone
on a hillside, a woman lay
Alone;
between valley and peak midway.
The sun
woke in the morning east and rose.
Begun
was the yellow day; at its close
She moved
and a timorous rabbit fled;
This proved
his instincts wrong; he guessed her dead;
She stretched
and her brown, naked arms fell wide,
Then fetched
some berries, that grew red beside
A stone,
up to her parched and pallid lips.
A moan
slipped through, flushed were her fingers tips.
She turned
her colorless face to the west,
Where burned
the sunset. Its parting bequest
Of light
blushing, lay on her garments stained.
The night
descended, and a star regained

The Voice.

Its place;
 the rocks gleamed forbidding and bleak;
The face
 of the moon looked over the peak.
A voice,
 soaring, rose from the cloud capped height;
“Rejoice,”
 it sang, through the hush of the night;
The chill
 of the snows through its sweetness crept;
A thrill
 shook the woman, shiv’ring she slept.
Clearer
 the notes of the distant song fell.
Nearer
 descending, the charm-potent spell
Captured
 the ghost guarded, dream haunted night;
Enraptured
 the stolid rocks caught the light,
Beating
 the dull echoes back into play,
Repeating
 the weird, ringing roundelay.

The choice
 is yours, and I am your voice;
Rejoice,
 O rejoice, rejoice, rejoice!
A blow
 from your will once set me free,
You know
 me not, for you banished me;

The Voice.

Who sings
 to you now? One you deny,
The wings
 of your soul, am I! am I!

So near
 the fluttering, beating breath seemed,
“I hear,”
 she answered, half wakened, yet dreamed;
And rose
 with the dew of dreams in her eyes;
“God knows!”
 with rapt face upturned to the skies,
She said
 and long waited, as all life must;
Her head
 she finally turned; the dead dust
She shook
 from her brown wrinkled robe, and then
She took
 her bent staff and toiled back again.
Rejoice
 for the far heights have come to her;
The voice
 is the soul’s born interpreter,
And deep
 in its crude, human harmonies.
Asleep
 a real secret of healing is;
O take
 it woman, and faithfully see,
You make
 it interpret sweet sympathy.

The Voice.

The hidden
 meaning of all life at last,
Forbidden
 by her tense, ambitious past,
Appeared
 to the woman as clear as day,
She feared
 no evil, she knew her own way.
Sublime
 seemed the work, she had left undone,
To climb
 the heights that can only be won
Being
 the plain truth, God meant her to be,
Seeing
 the heaven God meant her to see.

Why.

T RUE, this old world's logic is amiss,
In numerous things, and one is this;
That unchastity, to be a sin,
Must undoubtedly be feminine.
Since grammar dubs it common neuter,
Why make our social code dispute her?
Why forever truth and justice vex,
Giving sin, what it has not, a sex?
A sin's a sin who'er commits it,
And equal punishment befits it.

A Tale of the Primitive.

THERE was a primitive maid,
Who watched and wept in the shade
Of a primitive tomb:
A forgotten tomb in an everglade,
Where only the sprites of the swampland played,
And one wild rose did bloom;
One rose from a sun-sweet meadow, strayed here
To grow in the salt of a maiden's tear
And perfume the breath of the swampland drear.

There was a primitive man,
Who broke a slave's chains and ran;
Lost in cypress and pine,
Fainting he fell, and the bloodhounds swept by;
Red-tongued and reeking, their savage, hoarse cry
Broke in a baffled whine;
For the trail was lost, and the slave was free,
And the reason why was a mystery,
But many strange things did the black man see.

He saw the pale maiden there,
Her face in her falling hair,
Shone like a love-lit dream.
And he heard her sigh, and he heard her sing.
And where her tears fell, burst in blossoming
The rank swamp grass; the stream
Stagnant with fever malaria cursed,
Blown cool by her breath, quenched his burning thirst,
And the wise gnomes whispered, "The last is first."

A Tale of the Primitive.

And he heard her tender voice pray,
All the night and all the day,
Sweet as a low strung lyre;
The touch of her hand on his throbbing head,
Drew his sinking spirit back from the dead.
An invisible choir
Burst into song; and cold "Lyra's" white star
Shot down from the north constellation far,
And his life came back to make or to mar.

He rose and followed the maid,
Through the moss-hung everglade,
Slowly toward the light;
Her transparent palm held high in the air,
Showed the star like a torch reflected there,
Behind him stretched the night.
Alone, he staggered forth into the day,
And many there questioned him on the way,
As always the many curious may.

When he his strange story told,
They smiled, and a scoffer bold,
Laughed in the man's wan face.
And cried, "Miasma is the maiden's name.
She dwells in the swamp from whence this man came.
Mark you the fever's trace!"
Then the freed serf lifted his stricken head
And he spoke as one come back from the dead,
"This is the flower that she gave me," he said.

Behold! on his bosom bare,
'Neath the rags and tatters there,

A Tale of the Primitive.

Trembled a tear-wet rose.
And a wave of bewildered silence fell,
On the doubting throng, as spring's subtle spell
Fresh from a meadow blows.
From out his life's deepest experience,
The simple soul of the slave found the sense,
Which puzzled their self-centred impotence.

He timidly faltered, "May it not be
That the pale maiden's name is 'Constancy'?"
That the grave she keeps, is a martyr's grave,
Neglected by those for whom life he gave?
That the fadeless rose she has plucked for me,
Is the flower of deathless sympathy?
Little I know, but that little is much,
For in swamp despair, I have felt her touch;
I have wandered far, but the rose you see
In the salt of sacrifice blooms for me."
And the awe-struck listeners went their way.
Puzzling and doubting for many a day.
But here and there was a spirit, that knew
The tale of the primitive man was true.

Rivals.

YOU have been praised, and sung about,
 'Till you're puffed up and vain no doubt.
 But keen experience can see
Your rival, Mistress Memory;
He wooes a brighter beauty yet,
A care-free creature named Forget.

A Relic of Royal Favor.

A ROVING friend gave it to me,
But did not give its history;
I hung it near the grate,
And sometimes, very late,
When the coals drop down and glow
White above, and red below,
Then 'tis haunted; do not doubt it!
I who tell you know about it.

Listen,—It is a china plate,
On which the lurid flame of fate,
 Throws these shadow stories,
 Of the vanished glories,
 In a kingdom gained and lost,
 With the sacrifice they cost;
And in them plain, as plain can be,
Lays bare a human tragedy.

First a glittering palace lies,
Before my fascinated eyes;
 Then a vast wild ocean,
 A great ship in motion,
 Riding on the foaming crest
 Of the waves toward the West;
Now an unfamiliar shore, where
Palms grow and sunshine fills the air.

A Relic of Royal Favor.

Again a cloud capped mountain top
And a warm valley like a drop
 Of stern nature's mildness,
 In the desert wildness;
Here, beneath the glowing skies,
 A strange, ancient city lies;
O'er its rude pavements beat, beat, beat,
Brown multitudes of sandaled feet.

Dark, sad-eyed people to and fro,
Within its temple斯 come and go.
 Prostrate in fervent prayer
 Fallen, they wrestle there,
 In them still a subtle trace,
 Of great Montezuma's race.
As silent, sullen, cold they wait
The foreign conqueror, at their gate.

Ah, what a pageant! Like a dream
Of old world splendor it doth seem;
 Behold they are coming,
 Hear the loud drumming!
 Hurrah! 'Tis the martial note
 From the shrill pipe's warlike throat;
How the gay banners wave and glow,
As triumph tuned the bugles blow.

Wrangling bells discordant mingle,
With the jeweled trappings jingle;
 The shining brasses blare,
 And wild cheers rend the air;

A Relic of Royal Favor.

As a brave young Prince doth ride,
Down their ranks with his fair bride;
Loud they shout, "Vive d'Autriche le fleur,
Vive Maximilian l'Empereur!"

'Tis night, and loving moonbeams deck
With tender grace Chapultepec.
Divinely fair; and lo!
Carlotta's Paseo!
Its white way wandering down,
Into the slumbering town.
The hushed valley lies a dreaming;
Of sweet peace the perfect seeming..

Naught else presumes to mar the dark,
But the illusive, wayward mark,
Left by the ghostly tread,
Of "Pagan Gods" long dead;
Fleeing the cross of power,
Throned high in niche and tower,
Whence Patron Saints half smile, half frown
Upon a shrinking, new born crown.

Ah! witching night and sweet repose;
Ah! subtle breath of love's red rose;
Like music in the air
Passes your fragrance rare;
Your soft, velvet kisses trace
Dimples in the lady's face;
Deep in your tragic color lies
The secret of the brooding skies.

A Relic of Royal Favor.

Pale, weird, smoke scented, restless clouds
Flit o'er my plate like spectre shrouds;
 In them that black, craven
 Bird of prey the Raven,
 Holds grim orgies o'er the slain,
 On a ghastly battle plain;
From his fierce talons dropping down
The fragments of a shattered crown.

As with a wild exultant shriek
He flings forth from his bloodstained beak
 Royal jewels glowing,
 The dread war-path sowing
 With showers of fadeless sparks;
 Each gem's fallen splendor marks
Some unsung, unrecorded, brave
Deed, buried in an unknown grave.

A muffled sound of musketry,
A vision of a soul set free,
 A sob, a chill, a breath,
 A wing; The angel Death.
 A cloud curtain blown apart,
 And, alone, a broken heart;
A beam, caught from a hidden sun,
A king's crown lost, a martyr's won.

Like phantoms, 'neath forbidding skies
Three rough, unchiseled stones arise;
 And a wan face, waiting
 At a window grating;
 A wild, wanton, stray breeze blows
 Down a withered, once red rose;

A Relic of Royal Favor.

The wraith of far, forgotten June,
And distant chimes ring out of tune.

But last strange picture of them all,
A dim, deserted banquet hall;
 The grey dawn in the East,
 Lights an untasted feast.
 Shy, 'mid priceless treasures there,
 An awak'ning day lays bare
The placid surface of my plate,
A mirror yet uncrossed by fate.

A pause: The shamefaced, blushing light,
Betrays it now in hapless plight,
 Sunk amid the litter
 And the tarnished glitter,
 Of a musty old pawnshop,
 Where dust weighted cob-webs drop
Stealthily, their sly house-holders
On the prying tourist's shoulders.

* * * * *

But when I take it in my hand
'Tis a mere plate; a narrow band
 Of bright gold, circles round
 An oak-wreath acorn crowned;
 A pink ribbon, in and out,
 Freakish, trims it all about,
Ending in a frivolous knot,
That kindly hides a broken spot.

A Relic of Royal Favor.

I turn it over and behold!
Its origin is quaintly told
 To the proud connoisseur
 In a faint zig-zag blur;
 And upon its shining face
 Sits in haughty, feathered grace
An eagle, with his wings widespread,
Crushing a fangèd serpent dead.

And yet I do not understand;
Come you and take it in your hand;
 Sit beside the dying fire
 And hear the sighing wind.
 Pray tell me, if you know,
 Why these shadows come and go,
And why this decorated plate
Is haunted, when the hour grows late.

Untold.

I IMPLORÉ you, hear my prayer,
Send your spirit through the air,
Let your strong soul speak to me.
You have been and still must be
 My one real,
 True ideal.
The round relentless world has rolled
Between us; ah! it can't be told,
That broken story, let it go,
For you, as well as I, do know.

Blind.

H ENRI,
 'Tis true that I am blind,
 Yet I in shadows find
 Pale shifting stars, behind
 The shut lids; clear outlined
 Her face, also her mind,
 To me,
 Henri.

Henri,
 Her voice is dull and low,
 Her hair tawny; I know
 Her words are sweet and slow;
 She loves you not, although
 You think her heart aglow;
 Ah me!
 Henri.

Henri,
 Appeal to her, and she
 In languid lethargy
 Responds; her breath might be
 Drugged, from the blown poppy.
 Must you be blind, like me,
 To see?
 Henri.

Blind.

Henri,

The passion in her sighs
Doth only half disguise
The grave, that in her lies;
Speak sharp to her, surprise
The dead men in her eyes;
Grim pageantry,
O see!

Henri.

Henri,

There's no such word as fate.
It never is "too late;"
Love's angels patient wait
At virtue's open gate;
Pray thus; I hate! I hate!
With purity
And me,

Henri.

Ideala.

I KNOW
That on your way from "Mars,"
You've met and smitten the twin stars,
And they forsook divinest skies
To shine within your azure eyes.

I know
That hiding in your throat,
Is the enchanted, magic note,
Which a queen nightingale at birth
Lost in fluttering down to earth.

I know
The gold in rock and air
Has melted in your floating hair,
And kisses from the sun-god's lips
Have tinted pink your finger tips.

I know
Your shining form is dressed
In the warm colors of the west,
When hope's bright rainbow arch is spun
'Tween showers and a setting sun.

I know
You've stolen perfumed May,
While bathing in the milky way;
And twinkling stars have built a stair,
For your swift footsteps, light as air.

Ideala.

I know
You've passed some mystic sea,
As glad, you tip-toed down to me,
And the weird, green king napping there,
Have caught and tangled in your snare.

I know
In startled, foaming whirls,
He blindly tossed his purest pearls
Straight in between your rosy lips,
Where a sly, mocking cupid sips.

I know
The breath of budding south
Is 'prisoned in your perfect mouth ;
And I can hear your true heart beat,
Beneath your bosom soft and sweet.

I know
Your soul is white as snow,
Fresh fallen in the morning glow.
Ah ! you are love and life to me,
Would I were everything to thee !

* * * * *

I know
You are not what you seem,
But a dim, happy, haunting dream,
A spark, in that pale mystery,
Which separates my soul and me.

The Wind in the Corn.

THROUGH the fragrant whispering corn
 You and I,
 One dear, delicious, dewy morn,
 Tell me why?
On a feathery tassel swinging,
A drowsy meadow lark kept singing
 Lullaby!

The young ear's dainty silk robe blowing
 Hid your hair,
As though envious of my knowing,
 It was fair;
And though the magic hour was fleeting,
And my unruly heart was beating,
 O to dare!

To speak one little, tender, trembling
 Honest word,
Worth your unconscious soul's rememb'ring,
 Faintly stirred,
Deep in me somewhere, unsuspected,
In a dim corner, long neglected,
 Cobweb blurred,

A quick developed fear to wake you
 Dainty maid,
And I, though longing, dared not take you
 Where the shade

The Wind in the Corn.

Creeps up and catches half the sunbeams
In Love's arcadia of young dreams
Fancies fade.

In worldly wisdom I am older,
Than you guess,
And though it shames me, vastly bolder
I confess;
Yet your bewildering, beguiling,
Dimpling, provoking lips, in smiling
Happiness.

You risked upturned, your glad voice cooing
In my ear,
Blindly combined to my undoing;
And I fear,
That I shall never cease regretting,
Shall never cease fuming and fretting,
That while near,

I did forswear the tempting blisses
Hiding there,
Of your divine ungathered kisses
O my fair
Companion! rollicking and rosy,
Your sweetness like a perfumed posy
In some rare,

Old fashioned garden, holds and binds me
Through the years,
Forever and a day reminds me,
How my fears,
Betrayed my courage that fair morning,
And without a hint of warning
Come the tears.

The Wind in the Corn.

The long green leaves again are swaying,
 Like the sea;
The wooing, whisp'ring breeze is playing,
 Over me;
And on a feath'ry tassel swinging
A saucy meadow lark sits singing;
 And a bee

In dreams of industry goes humming
 On his way,
To meet the scent of clover coming
 From the hay
Fresh mown, and fragrant in the meadow;
And my rebellious thoughts are sped, O
 Happy day!

To that white messenger from Dove-land,
 He who sings,
Fluttering in and out of love-land,
 And who brings
The sweetest, tend'rest, truest stories,
To the listening morning-glories,
 On swift wings.

And in my garden early walking,
 While the new
Awakened flowers are blithely talking,
 Up to view,
In ecstacy I pluck and hold them,
In memory's embrace enfold them,
 In their dew,
Deep I drink young love to you, to you!

Beyond Words.

(RONDEL.)

THAT sad story in your eyes,
Abiding,
In hiding,
Fathoms deep in tears it lies.

Will love's fire your soul surprise?
Unchiding,
That sad story in your eyes,
Abiding?

You to his sweet sympathies,
Confiding,
Deciding,
To no longer thus disguise,
That sad story in your eyes,
Abiding.

A Portrait.

A MOIST bit of windy weather,
A wee bunch of purple heather,
A sma' cap, a perky feather
And a kilt.

A sturdy, nude and dimpled knee,
From out his half-hose workin' free,
A baby soldier braw' is he;
All a-tilt.

The little round and waggin' head,
With its short, dancin' curls of red,
A cheek the white and downy bed,
Of a rose;

A windy bagpipe on his hip,
A puzzled, puckered, rosy lip;
He's a Scotch piper to the tip
Of his toes.

O! my bonnie Highland laddie,
With your floatin' tartan plaiddie,
You're a portrait of gran'daddie,
Long ago.

I could swear that you were Jamie,
Puttin' up your little game, eh!
Standin' in an empty frame, hey!
But I know.

A Portrait.

You're a deceivin' daub of paint,
Hung in a wall niche stiff and quaint,
Absorbin' worship like a saint,
Since the flood;

And your great-grandson, with the rest,
Goes nightly to you to be blessed.
He's just yoursel' come back, the pest
Flesh and blood.

Love Song.

(IN MINOR KEY.)

LOVE can see, and love is blind;
Love can never be defined;
Love can see, and love is blind.

Love can neither come nor go,
Love is. This is all we know;
Love can neither come nor go.

Love can change, and love can be.
Less and more than we can see,
Love can change, and love can be.

Love can die; ah! this I know,
But I dare not tell you so,
Love can die; ah! this I know.

One love is, that has not died,
Though it has been sorely tried,
One love is, that has not died.

'Tis the mother's love, my dear,
It is deathless, never fear,
'Tis the mother's love, my dear.

The Sunset Bell.

WAKE, deathless faith of Israel!
Thy sunset bell
Is ringing, ringing,
Ushering in thy sacred day,
From far away,
Is bringing, bringing,
Thy straying children to thy fold,
As once of old.

From her polished metal throat,
Forth peals the note,
Deep throbbing, throbbing;
Heralding thine ancient glory,
And thy story.
Hides sobbing, sobbing;
Through her retreating cadence long,
Echoes thy wrong.

O, children of a mighty past,
Shalt thou at last
Be reunited?
Led through deep waters by His hand,
A nation stand,
In full requited.

The Sunset Bell.

God of the chosen, close to thee,
O, let us be
As near together!
And though our exiled sails be blown,
Guide thou thine own,
Through stormy weather.

To scoffing Christendom you tell
O, sunset bell,
Grim history;
But your prophetic echoes sweet,
Repeat, repeat,
Faith's mystery.

Robbed of a country, still are we
In majesty,
One people ever;
Though banished far through every clime
Biding Thy time,
Divided never.

Fate and the Fools.

YOU blundered first, and then 'twas I
Who followed your example;
My silly pride, unthinking why,
Made haste to match your sample.

And thus the final step was ta'en,
Fate and two fools thought clever;
Had vanity been sooner slain,
Love might have lived forever.

See how fate makes our frailties tools
To crucify our graces.
She cleverly selects the fools
And fits them in their places.

Come, let us pray, Lord haste the day
When we can turn the tables;
'Tis not too late, to conquer fate,
And chain her in our fables.

Stories in Stone.

(WRITTEN IN A COURT OF HEIDELBERG CASTLE.)

STOLID they stand in mute array,
Each man a monarch in his day;
Eight hundred years of Royal past,
Are told in stone, from first to last.
But war, and fire, and lightning shock,
Have stained and seared, the sturdy rock;
And now, alas! for this we sigh,
Four rows of pathos meet the eye.

Decapitated monarch thou!
Thy face is left to fancy now:
Come, tell us what ghost of the dead
In grim revenge cut off your head,
And left your broken body there,
Defiant image of despair.

Or did the lightning from God's throne,
Search out your heart and find it stone?
Then leave you, as the headsman's blow
Did leave your victim long ago?
To be the butt of every wight
Who views your miserable plight?

Stories in Stone.

At last you like your patron must
Fall, mould and crumble, into dust,
Not even stone can mock decay,
And you, proud king, have had your day.

And so good-bye, God warm your heart,
Give you of heaven's best a part!
And may the ivy green and bright
Grow thick and hide your scars from sight.

A Soldier of Fortune.

O UTSIDE! and I
Dare not give way to sob, nor sigh,
Nor question causes why.

Closed is the book,
I must not pause to turn the leaves; nor look
For the green paths we took.

I may not know,
The fair, familiar flowers that bud and blow,
Where love and laughter go.

Sunlight and sky,
Sweet scents and winsome waters bubbling by,
Anon a butterfly.

Through moonless night,
A self-illumined fire-fly's lonely flight,
Wings intermittent light.

I am sore tasked,
The face of my stern, changeless fate is masked;
Commands she all unasked.

Through mud-wed reeds,
O'er mountains and through tangled, tropic weeds,
No Dear Familiar leads.

A Soldier of Fortune.

Suspended high
A cross of swords, with luring laurel nigh,
A battle-field hard by.

The cruel shine of arms;
Sweet pity swoons and makes no sign,
Blood spills like wasted wine.

Who turns the key?
Locking the shy and modest mystery
Of love, from you and me.

What answer? None.
One dwells in shade, another in the sun.
Their web the fates have spun.

Life comes, life goes,
Each unfulfilled in purpose at its close.
What's after! no man knows.

But you believe!
Dear love, I hope that I myself deceive,
When I do see you grieve.

'Tis this may-be.
The silence gives one message unto thee,
Another unto me.

A bomb flung out
From the mixed maze of argument and doubt,
Puts cowardice to rout.

A Soldier of Fortune.

Some force there be,
That makes men slaves, before it makes men free.
Born blind they fight to see.

I go; and yet,
What if that cunning juggler and coquette,
Should prompt you to forget?

But no! you are
A lit fire, burning luminous and rare,
Joy nestles, constant, where

You smile and sing;
With you I hear, 'bove all life's clamoring,
The rustle of a wing.

A last kiss then
Before I leap into the passion pen
Of war-worshipping men.

Casting the die
For that crowned fetich called humanity,
That stumbles stolid by.

Pure peace sublime!
Will you, when I drag back my broken prime,
Greet me untouched by time?

A Problem of the Sea.

A PROBLEM has risen out of the sea,
 What will you do with it?
 "That is a question too mighty for me
Wait 'till we're through with it;
There is the coming campaign,
There is the loss and the gain,
Our course is not yet quite plain,
We may take the negative side,
Political int'rests divide."

Unresponsive and cold, forevermore
The slow retreating tide shrank from the shore,

A problem has risen out of the sea,
 What will you do with it?
 "Keep silent, and leave it to time, may be
 Something will brew in it.
Diplomacy well can wait,
Hiding her secrets of state,
Watching the hour and the fate;
The burden we lay upon you,
There is nothing for us to do."

Soothing and low, forever, evermore,
The surf washed this answer close to the shore.

A Problem of the Sea.

A problem has risen out of the sea,
What will you do with it?
"To bear it is problem enough for me,
I wear the rue of it:
Hugging your theories grand,
Blind to the blood on your hand,
You never will understand,
You never will count the sad cost,
You never will know what is lost."

Plaintive and low, forever, evermore,
The surf washed this answer up to the shore.

A problem has risen out of the sea,
What will you do with it?
"Put not so sorry a question to me,
This sting is true of it;
You won, on land and on sea;
I lost; what is it to me?
Victor, your future shall be
What you make it; yours is the day;
Devil take it! Find your own way."

Sullen and fierce, forever, evermore,
The surf frothed this answer over the shore.

A problem has risen out of the sea,
What will you do with it?
"I am naked, and black, and black must be,
Nothing I knew of it;

A Problem of the Sea.

You came up out of the night,
Your white sails poison my sight,
What do you know of the right?
A savage defiant am I,
Armed, ready to kill, and to die."

Piercing and shrill, forever, evermore,
The surf flung this answer back to the shore.

A problem has risen out of the sea,
 What will you do with it?
O pale, lonely Goddess of Liberty,
 Must you wear the rue of it?
"Fear not for me, I am strong,
To the weak your words belong,
For they know not right from wrong
Though they, resentful fling me nay!
I break the way for their great day,
Fulfilling thus my destiny."

Clear, firm, and true forever, ever free,
The waves sing this answer over the sea.

Two Ships that Sailed.

THE Ship of Glory sails to-day,
To martial music brave and gay;
The trumpets blare, the millions cheer,
The northern breeze blows crisp, and clear.
The sun is bright, the skies are blue,
And youth is strong, and hearts are true;
The Ship of Glory sails away,
To her triumphant destiny.
The Ship of Glory sails to-day.
And why should eager youth surmise
That in her silver shadow lies
Her silent twin ship, Sacrifice.

The Ship of Sacrifice to-day
Sails slowly on her homeward way;
The torrid breezes of the south,
The havoc from the cannon's mouth,
Have forced for her the right of way,
To lead into the harbor bay.
The Ship of Sacrifice is near,
Bearing her silent burden dear:
The Ship of Sacrifice is here.
O! Ship of Glory, where art thou?
A wraith adrift behind her bow,
O! phantom "Ship of Glory" now.

The Flight of the Bats.

L I HUNG sat in his door one day,
Singing soft lullabys;
Li Hung had such a childlike way,
And such innocent eyes.

Li Hung, rocking the cradle sang,
To moon-faced Baby Loo,
A lulling, low, celestial twang;
What could not Li Hung do?

Twilight fell; He sat with his fan,
As he had sat before;
Out of the shadows came a man,
Up to his laundry door.

The man was ragged, fierce and rough,
But from his rags he drew
A shining coin; This was enough.
Its value Li Hung knew.

Li Hung smiled, a seductive smile,
Salaamed the stranger in,
Chattering welcomes; All the while
Noting the pallid grin

That stuck in ghastly make believe,
Between the vagrant's lips;
Innocent Li, none can deceive,
Cunning he slyly sips

The Flight of the Bats.

From the steaming, slumberous tea,
The stranger swallows hot;
"Makie 'nough for friendie an' me,
Drink of the gods begot!"

"One little game, a fat jack pot,
Pipie 'tweenie we two,
Nice little bed, sweetie, why not?
Nice little dreams for you."

And the ragged man snored and slept,
Fighting dream devils blue;
The shadows high carnival kept;
Bats through the clap-boards flew.

And something crept over the floor,
Onto the ragged man;
And something that flashed through the door,
Quick as a cat began

To dig deep in the garden ground,
Where gourds and melons grew
And lost treasures could not be found;
Then, from a sleeve it drew

Gold, more gold, more gold, and yet more
Through ten slim fingers fell,
In a clinking, yellow down-pour,
No man could count or tell.

How the black shadows crawl and creep!
How well the work is done!
The treasure is buried down deep,
And honest rest is won.

The Flight of the Bats.

Then on the bent back of Li Hung,
Out from the gloom and chill,
Something in rags and tatters sprung,
Gripping, with 'vengeful will,

That other something, sleeved and gowned
That hovered gloating there;
Two in a heap, fell to the ground,
One, yet a fighting pair.

Over they rolled, over again,
Tense and panting for breath;
Which shall survive, and which be slain?
Defying purple death.

How long the struggle, what befell,
Nobody ever knew;
For neither was alive to tell,
When the wild vultures flew.

Then the lawful coroner came,
His whole duty to do,
Inquiring, while taking the name,
"Is this dead one or two?"

He proceeded in gravest state,
The mystery to sound;
And the witnesses all did wait
Till he death's cause had found.

And he drew so doleful a face,
The neighbors held their breath,
As he said, "I pronounce this case,
A case of hugged to death."

The Flight of the Bats.

But a chuckle hampered his speech,
Difficult to smother,
He was so much obliged to each,
For silencing 'tother.

And grimly to himself he said,
"There's no 'casion to wait,
The fact that both varmints is dead,
Clears up things fer the state."

And a sun and a moon looked down,
Counting a night and day,
In the little new border town,
Just the usual way.

But the yellow men's hearts were wrung,
Knowing it would not do,
To ship to the gods with Li Hung
The foreign devil too.

So they buried them well next day,
In one grave wide and deep,
These twin rascals finally lay
Locked together in sleep.

This was the legitimate fate,
Read the moral who can!
Of a tramping degenerate,
And gambling Chinaman.

Hear! Hear! the bewildering part,
How the wiseacres thought
'Twas celestial goodness of heart,
The mischief dire had wrought.

The Flight of the Bats.

They said, when the treasure was found,
 "In its defence Li died;
His motives were certainly sound,"
 The smooth-faced mourners cried.

Though his body they could not send
 Home to the empire dear;
The message read, "You may depend,
 He died a martyr here."

Thus the man from the Orient kept
 Repute and treasure, too;
And dollars piled up while he slept,
 Dollars for Baby Loo.

(SONG.)

Baby Loo, China baby Loo,
 Twinkle your heels and crow,
Moon-faced baby gurgle and coo,
 Into a man you'll grow.

NEMESIS.

In the shade of sage bush hollow,
 A ghastly secret lies,
And the voices follow, follow,
 Chanting a psalm of sighs.

There's a staggering trail, zig-zag.
 Snapped are the twigs and bent;
And here and there flutters a rag,
 Marking the way Cain went.

The Flight of the Bats.

There is blood on the bushes green,
Red drops flatten the dust;
A giant log serves as a screen;
Mould and marrow, and rust,

Bleaching bones and a mildewed pack,
Last of a plundered Jew;
But your story dates far, far back,
Hostage that no man knew.

Silently sheltered, sheltered well,
Guest of secretive time;
She who chooses her hour to tell,
To tell the prose of crime.

(SONG.)

Lullaby, little yellow boy,
The treasures big, boo! boo!
Laugh and grow fat, celestial joy,
You've nothing else to do.

In the Pope's Garden.

IN the great Pope's garden at Rome,
I was born and I make my home.
I am fair and dazzlingly white;
I am rare, and a royal sight;
I am sleek, and moral, and meek,
The most beautiful bird in Rome.

Now what do you guess me to be?
I whom the world travels to see;
An old-fashioned peacock, O no!
Though the common folk call me so;
My word, to a paradise bird,
I've bleached in the sunshine of Rome.

I'd always been satisfied quite,
But once in the tender twilight;
The Cardinals came all in red
The garden took flame, and my head
Was turned, and my jealous heart burned,
And I plucked at my feathers white.

In a temper I screamed and screeched,
'Till the force of my fury reached
The gay guards, who came in a huff,
Dressed in motley with staff and ruff;
O, color curse that made things worse!
That night in the garden at Rome.

In the Pope's Garden.

Then they threatened, cajoled and jeered,
'Till the cardinals interfered.
Though the holy men knelt in prayer,
To defeat the vain devils there,
I never stopped, 'till down I dropped,
Disgracing the garden at Rome.

There in feathers and fits I lay
And sulked, till the dawn of day:
Until into the rosy light
His Holiness walked, all in white;
Ah! what could be as fair as he?
That dew-divine morning in Rome.

Sweet sympathy smiled in the air
As he passed; the perfume of prayer
Clung about him. Over me fell
The fragrant and softening spell
Of a sorrowful soul; Peace stole
White winged to the garden at Rome.

Sore and shamed, I crept to the brink
Of a shimmering pool to drink;
Could that haggard reflection be
My own image staring at me?
To a shabby fright, in a night
I'd turned in the garden at Rome.

My eyes were weak, wat'ry and red,
Torn, tousled and tumbled my head;
My feathers hung drabbled and mussed;
I preened them, I flopped and I fussed,
My voice grown hoarse, croaking and coarse,
Defied me that morning in Rome.

In the Pope's Garden.

Ah! all this was long, long ago;
Yet that plague of a voice is so
Odiously common, that I
If possible, would rather die,
Than be found, betrayed by its sound
To the Pope's giggling guards at Rome.

Though I seem to myself to be
A creature from vanity free;
They wickedly wink and they chaff,
And at my discomfiture laugh,
My tastes deride, wounding my pride,
In the great Pope's garden at Rome.

A lily grows fragrant and tall,
By the sheltering garden wall;
O, you silly fowl, make your choice,
Humility sweetens a voice.
When will you know, that this is so?
In the Pope's green garden at Rome.

A Salvation Lass.

PRETTY DOLLY DOUBLEDAY, on her way,
Tripping to the barrack station
Of the army of salvation
Where they play
On a roaring rattling drum, b—um—b—um—tum.
They blow the shrill and shrieking fife,
And drill the soldiers to the life,
Shouting, come!
Come, ye sinners, one and all, great and small;
They turn a hymn tune to a march
And make the limp ones stiff as starch,
And they call,
Both saints and sinners from the street,
Where these on common ground may meet,
Like an ill-assorted brood, for their good.

But all this has naught to do, sweet, with you.
Ah! that most engaging bonnet,
With a red, red ribbon on it,
Modest, too.
One day I peeped in under, A wonder
Of deepest earnestness and grace,
So sanctified your dimpled face,
My blunder

A Salvation Lass.

Of impulsive impudence, my offence
Seemed to me of so black a dye,
I stopped and purchased a "War-Cry,"
 In defence
Of good manners; Then I tarried
'Till I owned all that you carried;
O, you sly salvation lass, what a pass!

Night in New Mexico.

THE sun round and red,
In a soft cloud bed,
Sinks to rest.
The earth bare and brown
Drinks the dew, deep down;
In the west.

The pueblo lies
Under twilight skies,
Silence blessed.
The ranchmen return,
Where the home fires burn,
In the west.

The moon sweeps through space,
With luminous grace,
At her best.
Her beams, free to play,
Turn night into day,
In the west.

The fed bronchos sleep,
In the corral deep
Unoppressed.
They have done their share
Of a day's work, there,
In the west.

Night in New Mexico.

The dwarf burros meek,
A night's lodging seek,
With the rest.
And patiently wait,
The swing of the gate,
In the west.

Swift shadows flit down
On adobes brown;
From his nest
A prairie-dog prowls;
Hark! a coyote howls;
In the west.

And the redmen dream,
Of the wrongs they deem
Unredressed.
And plan while they sleep,
Revenge black and deep,
In the west.

Armed soldier lads sleep,
While sentinels keep,
Keen the quest.
For rifle and sword
Check a savage horde
In the west.

Yet love's laughter lies,
In a brown maid's eyes,
A shy guest.
The sweep of her hair,
Blows bronze in the air,
Of the west.

Night in New Mexico.

The spell never yet,
Did a man forget,
 Try the test.
In the white moonlight,
Of a perfect night,
 In the west.

Evolution.

A WASTE of brilliant, mottled leaves
Drop on the shadowed earth, that heaves
A sigh profound;
As from her throbbing bosom surge
The deep notes of a funeral dirge,
With measured sound;
And soft, enshrouded summer lies
Buried, in autumn's paradise.

White Bees.

(A LEGEND.)

THEY say
The soft snowflakes we love,
Are white bees swarming from above;
The souls of bees frozen in flight
Blowing and buzzing back at night;
By day, unto the sun's fierce might
Yielding, they melt in pure delight;
Such ecstacy it is to know,
Their melting helps a rose to grow,
And every dainty flower that blows,
Its gratitude in fragrance shows.
And every blushing bud that lives,
Back to the bee its honey gives;
Thus of himself in spirit sweet,
The bee makes sacrifice complete.
And once this Legend proven true,
A lesson 'tis for all of you.
Does not the flight of the white bee,
Gain for him immortality?
And show the very Presence lies,
In voluntary sacrifice.

Vagabond Bay.

H O! now for a day on vagabond bay,
Is not this wonderful weather?
Ho! for a sail in a rollicking gale
Of laughter and love together.

Jump! for our boat is already afloat,
Jump! while I loosen the tether;
What do we care? we can drift anywhere
When hearts are light as a feather.

Out, out from the shore! no joy could be more!
Hark! What are the waves a-doing?
Waking echoes now, close, close on our bow,
A vagabond crew hallooing.

O, the rose in your cheek plays hide and seek,
A dove on the mast is cooing,
And Cupid's sly dart lies red in my heart.
This is the hour for a wooing!

In Daffodil Time.

O THE thrill of an English, north country spring!
When the black caps and meadow larks soar
and sing,
When the air in purple and silver is dressed,
And the sun with a warmth of promise is blessed;
When the sap in the winter-bound hazel leaps,
And an ecstasy over the brown earth sweeps.

Every foot of chill ground, its own glory flaunts,
And the flocks and the herds desert winter haunts;
For the scent of the pioneer grass is keen,
And they pant for a taste of the first young green.

The leaves of the larches and sycamores creep
From out the love buds, where these mysteries sleep:
The fell-side is tapestried over with gold,
O, the daffodil's fortune can not be told!

A carpet of violets yielding and sweet
All embedded in moss grows thick at your feet.
Drop the wrinkles of care, and bury your face
In its blue, bewildering fragrance and grace;

In Daffodil Time.

The crags are above, and the wet earth below,
But, pray, why should you care, or why should you
know?

For the new is the old, and the old the new;
All nature is yours, and all nature is you.

The waves of expectancy quiver and blow,
With the colors of things only dreamers know;
O, the wild, wooing wind, and rhythmical rhyme
"Of a Westmoreland wood, in daffodil time."

An American Beauty.

WONDROUS, fragrant flower,
Like a tower,
High above your fellows,
Whites, reds, yellows;
Flushed, triumphant, proud and tall,
Brown leaves like a parasol,
Shade your belle-ship's haughty head;
Green leaves a cool lustre shed
On your self-reliant stem,
Lifting that pink, petaled gem
Your unconscious, rosy face,
Turned with calm, confiding grace,
To the homage of the sun;
And the conquest thus begun,
The glad morning of thy birth,
Hath extended o'er the earth;
O, thou regal, rarest rose!
O, thou fragrant, fairest rose!
Perfect rose!—The world hath seen
And proclaimed thee beauty's queen.

To an Orchid.

O SCENTLESS flower with the crimson heart
And yellow lights shining through,
Wer't evolved from a tragedy in part
And part from a drop of dew?

Has't been to the heights where his loved ones go,
And looked on the spirit scroll;
Then made it thy mission to bloom below,
In the colors of the soul?

Neither mystic purple, nor tender pink,
But the love-touch of the two;
The breath of an angel warming the link,
With the sky's immortal blue.

The melting of suffering with a tear
In silent sympathy shed;
The strength of a spirit that's cast out fear,
The beat of a heart that's bled.

Are these then, thy sources of potent power,
Before which we mutely bow?
O mystical, mesmeric, dreamful flower,
From what world descendest thou?

A Memory and a Hope.

WITHOUT regret
 You go! and yet,
 Some far-off day, when you forget,
And pluck a purple violet,
 Who knows? but this may be;
You'll feel its perfumed power still,
 And you'll remember me,
 E'en 'gainst your will.

And I shall know!
 The blossoms in my hair,
In memory of those you once placed there,
 Will quiver so,
 That I shall know.

And be content.
 Maybe 'twas meant.
The breath and bloom of love should thus be spent;
The spirit's sympathy in fragrance sent.
 And if some day, should see
 You bent and broken,
 O then pray forget.
 Confess the need of me,
 And pluck a violet.

Sunset.

A RADIANCE of red sun drifting low,
Masking twilight in its sensuous glow.
The tinkling laughter of a winsome child.
A tangled wealth of meadow bloom run wild.
Ah, love! we two together, you and I
Stand hand in hand and watch the bending sky
Yield to the ardor of the leaping sea,
And meet, and melt, and seem like you and me,
One soul, through fire into eternity.

Amen.

THE Lord has risen, Amen! Amen!
Sing it over and over again:
And do not forget! forget! forget!
There's something to pray for, even yet;
'Tis the Easter joy that's come to stay,
And a risen Lord for every day.

سازمان اسناد و کتابخانه ملی

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